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Use of Technology in Buddhist Philosophy and Practice as a Form of Skillful Means

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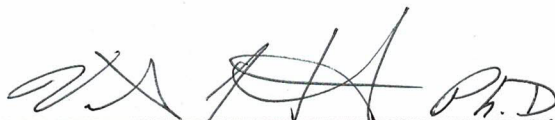
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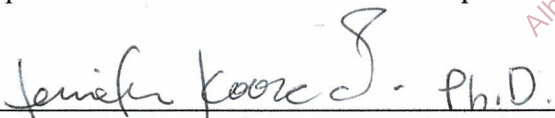
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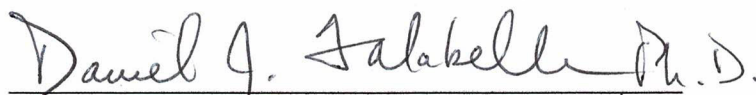
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21 March 2018

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While humans live in the 21st century, internet-based technology is developing rapidly. People try to apply technologies in their own lives as much as they can like a race of technology. In general, technology is now applied to many areas in society, such as entertainment, medicine, education, career, and so on. The place of internet technology in religion however, may not be as clear. For this paper, I will be focusing on the use of internet technology in Buddhism, as a possible form of skillful means¹ Buddhist philosophy and practice mostly reflects a way of living for human beings. Technologies and human living have an important relationship in the industrial world. Without internet technologies, people would lose much of their power to connect with the rest of the world. In order for the teachings of Buddhism to effectively connect with people throughout the world, internet technology could be understood as a form of skillful means. As a means of guidance for an appropriate path to liberation, internet technology could function as a form of skillful means through the rapid spreading of Buddhist philosophy and practice to persons all over the world, especially to young subjects. However, there are also growing concerns that internet technology can have a detrimental effect on human lives as well,²

¹ Skillful means “refers to the various teaching styles and pedagogical techniques used to communicate the Dharma, and reflects a debate in early Buddhism about the nature and efficacy of Buddhist teachings” (Schroeder, 37).

² “Meet Your iBrain: How the Technologies that have Become Part of Our Daily Lives are Changing the Way we Think” Gary Small and Gigi Vorgan; “Internet Paradox Revisited” by Robert Kraut, Sara Kiesler, Bonka Boneva, Jonathon Cummings, Vicki Helgeson, and Anne Crawford.

and one of the challenges facing the Buddhist use of this of this instrument as a form of skillful means, is that it could lead to doing more harm than good.

When people talk about the technology, they may think that it would be about materials that only deal with computers, smart devices, and so on. That is partly correct but not quite. Internet, email, online forums, social media, and so on are types of technology. However, the internet is the most powerful tool in technology that can connect people together in an easy way. The main purpose of technology, in this case is the internet is a tool that helps people handle the work faster compared to traditional tools. The idea of faster work in technology is the Internet can support people doing multiple works at the same time with the best results. In the traditional way, when people want to read a book they have to wait for the book to be published, to be printed out, to be released, and to be shipped to the community, such as in bookstores and markets. Those processes had to take time to complete. By using the Internet, the books are now turned into digital documents. They are posted online. That means that when the books are published, the audience can purchase and read the book right away without waiting to get the book at the bookstores.

Now, let's talk a little bit about social media. It can be defined as a technology to create or share information. Now we can see that social media is based in online platforms, such as Facebook, Skype, Instagram, Twitter, and so on. These social media platforms have become very popular and attracted many users in the community. These platforms are the fastest way to convey and share information to people in the community without worrying about time and location. Websites also serve as a form of multimedia that can contain many pages that are saved in a server. Websites and social media have very important roles in business, marketing, public relations, and etc. At present, we can see that every company, organization, school, or hospital

they all have their own websites with their phone numbers. A website is a short way to show the interaction between the companies, organizations, and customers. People can access the full services through the website anywhere and any time without waiting in line. The website creates the most convenience for users. Due to the conveniences that websites can bring to the community, religious organizations are using them as well. There are many churches and Buddhist temples using website functions to keep contact with their communities. From there, they can share the religious material, online discussion with questions, or so on. In Buddhism, a website supports a main function to maintain and develop how Buddhism can adapt in modern society. This is a great tool that Buddhism can apply to convey to the disciples.

Like what was discussed above, technology has given many opportunities to improve the interaction between people and institutions. But, how does technology affect human brains, thoughts, and psychological problems? This can be a big question that covers a whole background of how technology affects human brains and behaviors. In the article, “Meet Your iBrain: How the Technologies that have Become Part of Our Daily Lives are Changing the Way we Think” Gary Small and Gigi Vorgan said, “The currently explosion of digital technology not only is changing the way we live and communicate but also is rapidly and profoundly altering our brain” (Small and Vorgan 44). The conveniences and multiple interactions of digital technology makes people depend on it. The technology makes people think about using technology first before thinking of other solutions. For example, the term ‘Google’ is the name of a company and search engine tool to help the users search materials on the Internet easier. However, the term ‘Google’ is converted from noun to verb. Most students and business people use this term look up something on the Internet. This can prove that how the technology tool can arise in human mind all of the time. To clarify that, in the same article by Gary Small and Gigi

Vorgan, they states, “As the brain evolves and shifts its focus toward new technological skills, it drifts away from fundamental social skills, such as reading facial expressions during conversation or grasping the emotional context of a subtle gesture” (Small and Vorgan 44). From this, we can see that technology steals most of the face-to-face expressions through the emotional context in a conversation.

People now can have conversation online by using Skype, Yahoo, Facebook, and so on. This is one of the good sides of technology that it can keep people close to each other. Another example in an article, “Internet Paradox Revisited” by Robert Kraut, Sara Kiesler, Bonka Boneva, Jonathon Cummings, Vicki Helgeson, and Anne Crawford:

“The main effects of Internet use on these measures of social involvement were generally positive [...] participants who used the Internet more had larger increases in the sizes of their local social circle ($p < .01$) and distant social circle ($p < .01$) and their face to face interaction with friends and family increased ($p < .05$) [...]. They also reported becoming more involved in community activities ($p < .10$) and felt greater trust in people ($p < .05$). The only significant reversal to the positive trend is that those who used the Internet more became less committed to living in the Pittsburgh area ($p < .05$)” (Kraut et al. 61).

So technology helps to maintain the relationships between people together and it also maintains social circles. This is one of the good sides of how technology can change the human mind and affect the human brain.

Additional negative effects of technology on the human brain can be found in the article “Internet Paradox: A Social Technology That Reduces Social Involvement and Psychological Well-Being?” by Robert Kraut, Michael Patterson, Vicki Lundmark, Sara Kiesler, Tridas

Mukopadhyay, and William Scherlis Carnegie Mellon University, the authors said, "... greater use of the Internet was associated with declines in participants' communication with family members in the household, declines in the size of their social circle, and increases in their depression and loneliness. These findings have implications for research, for public policy, and for the design of technology" (Kraut et al, 1017). Technology can effect to human's psychology by increasing the depression because of less interaction with face-to-face society. Also, the level of loneliness is increased. The convenience of technology makes people have to focus on it and the technology becomes centralization between human's communications. We can say that technology made people addicted in it. People can abuse the technology for many things in life, and technology can make human's brain become lazy in the sense of problem solving and decreasing the interaction between humans face to face.

Application of Buddhist Skillful means to the Uses of Internet Technology

What is the meaning of the term *upaya*? It is one of the terms that is used in the Mahayana tradition of Buddhism. The term relates to a text in the Lotus Sutra known as the "Parable of the Burning House," about three children playing in a house. They keep playing with their toys without a care about anything around them or even what is happening outside the house. Suddenly, the house is catches fire. However, they do not really know that they are stuck in the house. They keep playing with their toys inside the house. Their father tries to call out to them, but they do not listen to him, he tries to trick them by telling them that he has three kinds of carts they have long wanted: the first one is a cart pulled by a goat, the second one is by a deer, and the third is by an ox. After the children heard that, they ran out of the house right away. In this way the father saved his children from the fire. This "Parable of the burning house" became popular in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition. In this story, the father represents the

Buddha, the children represent all human beings, and three carts represent the vehicles in Buddhism. This story can be straightforward to help us easily understanding the basic concept of skillful means.

According to John Schroeder, “In general, skillful means refers to the various teaching styles and pedagogical techniques used to communicate the Dharma, and reflects a debate in early Buddhism about the nature and efficacy of Buddhist teachings” (Schroeder, 37). Skillful means has a great support to the Dharma in Buddhism. The flexibility and various from skillful means that can make easier way to bring Buddhist Dharma closer to the practitioners.

How can we say that technology is functioned as skillful means in Buddhism? We can see that the technology in this case is the Internet can represent one of the carts in the Parable burning house story. As the Internet is developing day by day; it covers most of the activities in humans' community. Buddhism needs to borrow the skills of Internet to help people easily adapt to Buddhism. By using the Internet, people can learn more about Buddhism, specially is the young people. Since, the Internet develops and attracts the young people in modern life; so, it is like a bridge that connects the young people, such as high school, college students, and so on to Buddhism. In traditional Buddhism, the Buddhist texts are a type of skillful means in that people can read the texts and follow the philosophies and practices. Using internet technology as a tool to convey Buddhist doctrine to people, can help people inculcate the Buddhist philosophies more quickly looking up the material online.

How many technologies can apply to Buddhism? There are many types of technology that can apply; however, we can focus on three types, which are network technology, software and hardware technology, and digital technology. These three types are very important to spread

Buddhism to the community in a fast way. We will discuss and explore the details of each type, and see how the technology can be a great tool to spread out Buddhism. Buddhism knows how to use it correctly . The main purpose here is to help people who are interested in Buddhism, to explore it without obstacles, without the limitations of book-based materials. Someone who has never heard about Buddhism but love technology will often access the Internet when they have free time. Therefore, technology is like a delivery tool to help them get a taste of Buddhism to see how the main ideas of Buddhism affect their life. By using only traditional ways, religions may have a difficult time when they want to spread their philosophies or practices to a modern society. Using the traditional way to spread religion may not fit in the modern society. For example, some people do not like reading books anymore; they like to explore the materials on the Internet. Therefore, if a religion still wants to continue and develop, that religion needs to follow the flow of the society.

In addition, the sufferings of the Buddhist community in history and at present are much different. The life that Buddhists lived in history was not as convenient as our modern life at present, so the demands of life and the associated cravings were limited during the earlier periods. Technology can also increase cravings in people. For instance, each year Apple releases new versions of their iphones and other products, making people crave to purchase the most advanced technologies. Because Buddhists have reflected on the causes of craving throughout history, they can also point to the ways technology can bring about negative consequences for human beings. Revealing these negative effects can function as a tool that can be used to study Buddhism. One habit can be used to curb another habit. The habit of material desire causes cravings, but technology can also be employed to curb the habit, brought about by ignorance. Buddhist skillful means can therefore use technology in order to free ourselves from technology.

Network technology seems to be the most popular in the Buddhist community. Network technology is a type of media that can keep Buddhist community together. This form of technology includes websites, forums/ blogs, and social media. In the article, “To come to a correct understanding of Buddhism: A case study on spiritualizing technology, religious authority, and the boundaries of orthodoxy and identity in a Buddhist Web forum” by Laura Busch she states, “For Sri Dhammananda the internet is a tool for disseminating the teachings of Buddhism, teachings that could change the next generation of Buddhists and non-Buddhists, instilling them with Buddhist ethical values that could bring about a positive social revolution” (Busch, 63). In addition, while the “Sangha” is traditionally understood as the community of Buddhists, an “E-sangha” is an online Buddhist community. By using the Internet, the community of Buddhists, including monks and nuns can meet and discuss posted topics online along with lay followers.

In this way, Buddhist run websites can contribute to changing society for the good based on the promotion of the Buddhist values of peace and harmony. According to Laura Busch, for example,

“E-sangha was created and is owned by a Buddhist man in Singapore (the site is hosted in the USA), who created the site to not only be a benefit to Buddhists, but a benefit to everyone. The site itself is guided by three overarching goals: first, to provide a space for Buddhists to meet and discuss various topics; second, to enable the development of a correct understanding of Buddhism through two-way discussion between traditions; and third, to ‘keep the tradition alive and flourishing, and to help bring peace, harmony and happiness into everyone’s lives’” (Busch, 65).

In this case, the online service has a powerful role in keeping the Buddhist community in the world together. From there, they can share and learn from each other about Buddhist doctrine and practice. In an additional example from the article, “Buddha Browning: American Buddhism and the Internet” by Ally Ostrowski, the writer said,

“those who are older and utilizing online Buddhist resources will also be more likely to visit Buddhist chat rooms. Older people could potentially have a more difficult time in locating other practicing Buddhists of their own age and therefore enter the cybersangha for community support, while younger people might have greater access to practitioners of their own age or at least have more mobility in order to physically locate other Buddhists” (96).

This is like a forum page where people can access a chat room and discuss Buddhist topics. It is a great tool to help older people in need and a good way to attract younger people. In addition, it allows people to find new friends for community support.

The web does not only give these beneficial features for the Buddhist sangha, it also provides a great tool to scholars who are interested in Buddhism and want to learn more about Buddhist philosophy. In the article “Buddhist-Christian Scholarship and the World Wide Web,” Jonas Barciauskas states:

“Clearly, using the Web is still an adventure for scholars seeking reliable texts, particularly Buddhist texts, but excellent and authoritative sites are available. The more one experiments with search strategies, the greater the possibility some useful material will be found.” (113)

We also see that the Web can be a free opened source library where researchers can reference the materials from it. They can download the materials without limitation. Moreover, the web can be backed up often to keep storage maintained without worrying about losing data.

There are also online forums and blogs related to Buddhism. One Chinese Buddhist teacher, named Xuecheng created a blog that is now the Buddhist celebrity's micro-blog. In the article, "Ancient Virtues for The Virtual World" by Tang Yuankai, the writer states, "the Buddhist celebrity's microblog is followed by people from more than 100 countries. Over 200,000 fans follow his Chinese micro-blogs (weibo.com/xuecheng, and t.qq.com/xuechengfashi), rivaling the popularity of some movie stars" (40). The convenience of a blog can attract and connect people together from many countries around the world. They will keep their mind in the blog and follow all the events and topics that are discussed. The power of blogs is that people can access anytime and anywhere they want. Blogs provide a revolution in modern Buddhism.

In the article, "The Tangled Web of Buddhism: An Internet Analysis of Religious Doctrinal Differences" by Buster Smith, he conducted research on analyzing Buddhist websites and their links to see how the links of Buddhist organizations relate or not relate to each other. According to Smith:

" Among the 1068 American Buddhist websites there were a total of 861,631 external links, which constituted 67,253 unique websites. The reason for this large difference is that many of the Buddhist websites linked to the same sites, as well as linking to them many different times. Thus, if a site linked to google.com 20 different times this would only count as one unique website, but 20 different links. In fact, the mean number of

times each external website was linked to was 12.8. The median however was only 1, since over 40,000 of the external links were only connected to once. This was balanced by a few outliers that had over 10,000 connections” (Smith, 310).

We can see a large number of links and websites of Buddhist organizations that exist in America and around the world. However, the fact here is that most of the links are connected to each other. We can see that there is not only Buddhist organizations connected in the community, but there is also a strong Buddhist community online. We can tell it is even more than in the real community. By linking to each other, Buddhist websites can have more opportunity to share ideas and experiences to each other to bring out the best quality of Buddhist practice without breaking any traditional form.

Given this high level of internet use among Buddhists, one may wonder if monks have Facebook or Twitter accounts. Back to the article, “Ancient Virtues for The Virtual World,” One example is Ven Xuecheng, who has a Facebook and Twitter accounts. By using these social media, the Ven Xuecheng can register as a user on micro-blog websites in many countries, so that he can join the Buddhist community on the blog (Yuankai, 40). The use of Social media is however, complex, Xuecheng knows how to use the useful side of social media to link with the Buddhist online community. From there, he can have a greater opportunity to support his Buddhist students, friends, and family members in China and around the world to bring them and Buddhism together. Does the social media make Ven Xuecheng an addict or craving the power of the Internet? He knows how to curb the social media from the function of double-edged sword to a great tool of skillful means in sense of knowing people like to use social media every moment.

Buddhist organizations and institutions are also making extensive use of hardware and software technologies in order to provide greater access to teachings and practice. For example, an online app (such as: Shambhala Meditation app, Buddhist Geeks, and so on.) is programmed to help Buddhist scholars have more helping tools for their research. In a study of this app, “Towards a digital research environment for Buddhist studies,” by Kiyonori Nagasaki, Toru Tomabechi, and Masahiro Shimoda, the writers stated, “Information on variant readings, links to other witnesses, to modern translations, to research papers, and other philological notes are to be appended to the text data through the annotation system consisting of a separate database shared by multiple text databases” (Nagasaki et al, 298) With multiple translated languages, this online app functions as a strong tool to connect all scholars from around the world. This online app will link to a database system and help scholars translate works from multiple languages for research papers, saving a great deal of time during the research process.

There are many other apps on smartphones and tablets created to provide convenient access to Buddhist doctrine. Examples include Buddhist Bibles, for users to get free access to Buddhist texts on their phone to read or chant, biographies of the Buddha’s life, images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for users to turn their phones or tablets into a picture frame for worship. Many modern Buddhists are very busy with their work and other responsibilities and they do not have the chance for worship during the day, so they can use all of these conveniences from their tablets and phones to practice when they have a break at work or other short break periods during the day. The computer, printer, and projector are the three major kinds of hardware that Buddhism often uses it to teach lessons to monks. The monks can use the computers to access the internet to read the news and look up information to support their works. The printers can be used to print out Buddhist materials and documents for the students.

Maybe the most influential recent innovation in the spread of Buddhism is in the mass media now available through digital technology. Mass media mainly refers to the various delivery systems of contemporary popular culture. In the journal article, “The Mediatization of Buddhism in Digital Media: Contemporary Reflection of Uisang's Hwaom Thought” by Dal Yong Jin, he said,

“when the soul is purified after having surpassed the obstacles of the physical world. This is when the soul rests in the seventh heaven, or Nirvana. Some evolved beings will not rest until the whole humanity has evolved, so they come back to the physical world one more time, in a new body, conscious of their wisdom, to teach humanity the path to evolution, and therefore, help them reach heaven. These people are called avatars. Avatar also reflects some of the major Buddhist philosophy because it portrays the Nirvana Sutra” (Jin, 201).

Digital media/ digital technology, in this case is movie production, it does not only show the whole concepts of the space and the universe. But it also believes in Buddhism that makes Buddhism a part relating to the movie. Avatar was a record grossing film, attracting many audiences, especially younger audiences. T After younger people watch this movie, they will get some sense of Buddhist meaning, recognizing symbols that belong to Buddhism.

There is another hardware device that most Chinese and Vietnamese people know about. That is the chanting box. There are many people in Asia use this device. Mahayana Buddhism is very popular in these countries; Pure Land Buddhism is the form that people in these countries like to practice. The main practice in Pure Land Buddhism is reciting the ‘Amida Buddha’ title, who will bring the humans to the Western Paradise after they die. That is a reason this recitation

device was created. In the article, "Buddha in a Box: The Materiality of Recitation in Contemporary Chinese Buddhism" by Natasha Heller, the author will give more details about this chanting box:

“Buddha-recitation devices are contemporary objects, appearing roughly three decades ago, but not entirely modern. While they make use of digital sound files to provide users with different chants and invocations, these files are encased in something that disguises the digital aspect and mutes their manipulability. Although with ephemera of this type it is difficult to assess historical development, the devices seem to have grown in complexity over time, adding multiple audio tracks and the means to play them in different ways” (Heller, 296).

We can see that although this device marked a great turning point between technology and Buddhism. Recitation and chanting are the way of practice in Buddhism. So, this recitation device can help to keep repeating the recitation the title of a Buddha name or a sutra. Some people practice chanting by following this device audio. Using this device to practice Buddhism is a good way to keep the recitation in mind over again. Furthermore, people can use the headphone to listen to the recitation by themselves to avoid bothering other people around them.

Mass media is one of the popular types of media that many organizations use, including Buddhism. Mass media is quite varied; it can be used in entertainment, documentaries, and so on. In the past, VHS tapes were very popular in the late 1970s and into the 1980s. It is used in many fields to record and maintain the materials about objects or subjects in the past. Most families have the favorite video and movie on VHS. Most Buddhist discourse is spoken by a Buddhist monk that was recorded by video tape (VHS tapes). From there, people can watch that

tape again to learn the materials in that discourse. As the technology is developing, VHS tapes now are converted to DVD discs to keep and maintain the Buddhist materials for a long period. DVD discs provided improved quality is greater durability. Years later, when YouTube was created in 2005, a new mass media option allowed videos to be uploaded online and shared around the world. This innovation saves both time and money, providing full HD versions with the best resolution color quality. The skillful means of YouTube and videos helps reach people in many countries, opening another world of Buddhist communication.

In another article regarding Artificial intelligence “This Japanese robot can host low-cost Buddhist funerals” by Matthew Field, he wrote, “A Japanese company has found a new role for Softbank's Pepper robot: a Buddhist priest-for-hire. Plastics manufacturer Nissei Eco has trained Pepper to read scriptures, chant prayers and tap drums as part of a funeral ceremony” (Field). AI can therefore play a useful role in religion, in this case, Buddhism. Buddhism believes in an afterlife. So, by using AI in Buddhism, it may save lots of time for the monks who are in charge of funeral ceremonies. They can spend those times to do their Buddhist missions in the temples which is more important. Moreover, by using a robot for a Buddhist priest in a funeral ceremony, we can let that robot chant and pray anytime during a day without worrying about time distraction, and so on. This AI robot can be placed at many places that it needs to be used. Mostly it can work for a nursing home, hospital, or funeral home. Softbank's Pepper robot marks a big jump in the Buddhist community, it makes Buddhism now more close to people in society, and makes everything become more convenient. We know that using robots in the funeral is very convenient but it seems to lose the traditional practice of Buddhism.

LED technology is now applied in Buddhism, in the article, “Japan's techno-cemeteries replace tombstones with LED Buddhas and conveyor belts” by Emiko Jozuka, she said,

Nakajima's chosen Buddha statue is flanked on all sides by a collection of 2,045 LED-lit statues of variant hues, spread across the walls of this alternative graveyard space. Each statue—which is placed on the wall inside a transparent glass casing—either already represents a deceased person or will do so in the future, once a visitor like Nakajima decides to have his or her cremated remains housed in a storage locker located directly behind the wall. Synced up to swipe cards, the statues glow a different color when a visitor arrives so they can be located more easily (Jozuka).

This LED technology makes a big change in Buddhist traditional temples. Each status will represent a name of a person. Using the swipe cards like in banking, when people come and visit the graveyard space, they can just swipe the card and spend time with their family members. Moreover, this can make the visit more dignified because they can spend time to chant and pray for their family members. This LED technology can make it more attractive for Buddhists in Japan, allowing for Buddhism to more easily attract practitioners adapted the modern world.

We did go through all types of the technology: network technology, software and hardware technology, and digital technology, they all bring positive effects to Buddhism in practice and belief. To provide more evidence of how technology is applied in Buddhism, I have conducted interviews with Buddhist monks and disciples. My first email interview was with Ven. *Thich Thien Thuan* at *Vien Chuyen Tu* monastery, *Lang Van Hanh, Dong Nai, Vietnam*. His Buddhist methodology is Pure Land Buddhism. When he is asked that, does ‘technology’ have any negative affect to the traditional belief and practice in Buddhism at present?” He responded that, although the technology has some bad side effects, it has contributed to Buddhism through teaching lessons by using projector, looking up the materials, matters relating to Buddhism, updating the news in society. Also, the technology helps to transport the information to other

people quicker, it can help live stream for a discourse teaching, online questions and answers in Buddhism, keeps in touch with Buddhism in Vietnam and other countries.

In another email interview with Ven. Thich Chuc Dai at *Giac Son Temple, Maryland, USA*. His Buddhist methodology is meditation and Pure Land Buddhism. he stated that in the process of practicing Buddhism, if our minds have contact with bad pictures and bad information on the Internet, that will have a bad effect to the process of Buddhist practice. Since, humans' mind is still weak, the bad viruses from Internet and social media can enter our minds. It also affects the progress of practicing Buddhism. However, he also gave some positive ideas about Buddhism. He said that the social media, web, blog, and so on can be used to convey information of Buddhism to people in society quickly. It also helps for looking up information online about Buddhism.

The last person was interviewed through email was *Mr. Quang*, who is just a frequent volunteer at the *Phat Bao Temple, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA*. His Buddhist methodology is Zen Buddhism. With a same question, he answered,

In my personal opinion, there are two sides to everything in life (ie. Positive/negative balance). It is how the end-users employ/apply the technological advances and for what purposes that ultimate determine/justify the means to an end. Positively speaking, the use of internet has proven to be a useful/effective vehicle/platform for spreading the dharma teachings. By the same token, the world has also seen the use of social media as a dangerous/vulnerable tool for religious extremists to recruit/enhance their forces leading to negative outcomes. To a certain extent, I think the use of technology with a bad intention will have a negative influence on how Buddhism is presented to the target group

of audience. With that said, it's important for the Buddhist practitioners or lay-person alike to thoroughly examine/analyze/contemplate the messages being presented to them in a fair/unbiased way and decide for themselves the appropriate course of action. I would like to share with you what the Buddha once taught his disciples: 'Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. Do not give up your authority and follow blindly the will of others. This way will lead to only delusion. Find out for yourself what is truth, what is real after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

Based on Quang's response, most people will agree that everything has two sides. We know to practice and follow the side that brings the good affects us. It is the same with technology, it can lead people to the negative way, even to killing. Used a positive way technology spreads out the vehicle, platform, and dharma of Buddhism to the world. However, no matter what source, it needs to be analyzed and understood the root/truth of the problem. We cannot hear anything from people or believe anything from them. We need to touch and feel, observe and analyze it. It is the same with technology, when people say that technology is bad, we should not believe them right away.. From there, we can finally understand which aspects are good and bad need to apply and avoid.

In the article, "Using Skillful Means Skillfully: The Buddhist Doctrine of Upaya and Its Methodological Implications" by Andrew McGarrity, he said, "Normatively deciding what is and is not skillful means can itself, at its worst, become a skillful means of covering up our own

ignorance of the issues involved in the tradition and our own limitations as interpreters. Upaya is a dangerous concept to over-apply when we are not qualified to apply it at all” (McGarrity, 213). Like we mentioned before that everything has two sides. It is the same with Upaya (skillful means) in Buddhism, if we try to over apply it, it can be turned to a worse problem. If we over apply technology to Buddhism, we may lose some of the traditional aspects of Buddhism. Also, we need to know what is the best skillful means that we can apply. If we pick a wrong skillful means, it can have horrible results. Technology is always helpful in a certain way, but will not helpful if we use it with a wrong purpose. The use of technology is like a type of medication, human beings are patients, and suffering is a disease. If we take the wrong medication for our disease it will lead to harmful results. It can make the disease worse and worse. Like in technology, it will not work out if we play games, play gamble with it, or do something else that is wasting our time.

We know that technology has many positive effects for Buddhist practice and philosophy. However, some people also abuse technology to distort Buddhist philosophy and practice. Some people do not understand Buddhist philosophy; they try to speak against the idea of Buddhism. They make false statements about Buddhism. When this happens, Buddhist followers will become increasingly distrustful, affecting the time and method of practice in Buddhism. By abusing the technology, people can post negative statements about Buddhism to make Buddhist followers have to think poorly about their practice. This is a destructive side of technology that affect Buddhism. It can possibly dissolve the sangha and Buddhist community.

In conclusion, technology is a good source of skillful means in Buddhist belief and practice. It is a great tool to transfer and convey the Buddhist doctrine to around the world for both those who are familiar with Buddhism and those who know very little about the religion. .

Technology can help save lots of material from printing out materials. It also attracts younger people to get involved in Buddhism. As the world is developing, Buddhism will try to catch the world based on skillful means. The skillful means of technology is one example, especially in the form of websites, mass media, software and hardware, digital media, social media, and AI. These examples prove that technology becomes a good tool of skillful means in Buddhism. It helps Buddhism become more popular and long lasting.

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